



The Empire State Shines with the New York Quarter

January 8, 2001

ALBANY, NY, January 8, 2001 — To coin a phrase, the Empire State now has a “place in the pockets” of Americans across the country. Today, U.S. Treasurer Mary Ellen Withrow and Governor George E. Pataki officially unveil the New York quarter, the newest coin of the U.S. Mint 50 State Quarters™ Program. The New York quarter is the sixth quarter of the new millennium minted under the U.S. Mint’s widely popular program — and the eleventh quarter since the program started in 1999.

The quarter pays tribute to New York’s rich and influential history. Images of the Statue of Liberty superimposed over an outline of New York State — along with the inscription “Gateway to Freedom” — celebrate the role of New York in America’s history. Lines tracing the Hudson River and Erie Canal are also etched into the state’s outline. These two important waterways were not included in the original design. They were added at Governor Pataki’s request to pay tribute to their importance in the state’s development.

The celebration takes place at the New York State Museum in Albany, coinciding with the museum’s new “Gateway to Freedom” exhibit. The exhibit features a retrospective look at the two-year selection process orchestrated by the Governor’s office to choose the quarter’s design. The exhibit highlights the winning design as well as five finalist designs considered by Governor Pataki.

For more than 100 years, the Statue of Liberty was the first symbol of freedom viewed by immigrants entering the United States through Ellis Island. “Gateway to Freedom celebrates New York’s place in history as the entry point for millions of immigrants coming to America seeking the opportunities that living in a free society provides,” said Withrow. “By selecting this design for the New York quarter, Governor Pataki and the citizens of New York are paying homage to the people who came from around the world to make New York a diverse, multi-cultural state.”

“I am pleased that the 50 State Quarters Program has allowed us to capture and honor this important symbol in our Nation’s history,” said U.S. Mint Director Jay W. Johnson. “This design celebrates New York’s historic importance for those courageous people who came to America seeking the opportunities of a free society.”

Elementary school children attending the celebration will receive a shiny New York quarter to jump-start their own collections, adding to the coin collecting craze sweeping the nation. U.S. Mint research shows that well over 114 million American households are collecting these quarters. 50 State Quarters products such as pristine proof sets, educational maps and unique jewelry are adding to the collecting fun. They are available through the U.S. Mint’s Web site at www.usmint.gov or by calling 1-800-USAMINT. More information about the 50 State Quarters Program can be found via the Web site as well.

The release of the New York quarter marks the end of production of the Virginia quarter, which was released in October 2000. Each new quarter is minted for about 10 weeks, after which it is no longer produced. The new quarters are manufactured at both the Philadelphia and Denver Mints. Together, they produce all legal tender U.S. circulating coins before being shipped to the Federal Reserve for distribution through the banking system. The Federal Reserve orders new quarters to ensure an adequate supply to meet the needs of commerce as commercial banks demand.

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